DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT - 60 St Ann Street, Salisbury, SP1 2DX

Personal Statement - Mrs Ann Murrell (Professionally known as Ann Ballantyne)

Experience of Historic Buildings and Conservation:
Since childhood I have been fascinated by ancient buildings. My career of over 50 years has been spent conserving mediaeval wall paintings and historic monuments. Initially assisting Dr E Clive Rouse in the conservation of mediaeval wall paintings and allied artefacts from 1966. By 1975 he Considered me sufficiently competent to train and supervise new assistants. When Dr Rouse retired in1981, I became a freelance conservator of mainly mediaeval wall paintings, often employing small teams of conservators to assist me with the larger commissions. I retired in 2018.

From time to time I used to be asked to take on a student (mainly from Europe) wanting to learn and understand the way in which we use lime in the conservation of wall paintings in England. These students have been from France, Italy, Portugal. Spain, Germany, Poland, Turkey and Greece.

I was a member in 1984 of the founding committee of the Wall Paintings Section of U.K.I.C and chairman 1988-91.

In 1985 the Courtauld Institute of Art and the Getty Conservation Institute, formed a committee to set up a Board of Studies to establish a Course in the Conservation of Wall Paintings at the Courtauld Institute. I was asked to serve as a member of this committee at its inauguration in 1985 and continued to serve until 1991.

After the 1984 fire in York minster I was asked to return to York minster to inspect any damage to the painted coffin lid of Archbishop Walter de Gray, exhibited in the undercroft museum, which had been partly flooded during the extinguishing of the fire. I was then asked to remain on site in a consultant capacity until the extent of damage and need for conservation of other areas of polychromy was known, and to cary out any conservation that was needed.

During conservation and restoration work in the Chapel and the Cannons Cloisters of Windsor Castle (1997-2016) I was asked to inspect, report, and where necessary, clean and conserve areas of early wall paintings and traces of pigment, as and wherever traces of colour were exposed during the conservation and restoration work.

Between 1971 - 2014 I carried out conservation work within Salisbury Cathedral. I was called upon to inspect surviving areas of mediaeval painting and subsequently to clean and conserve the areas inspected, such as: The tomb of William de Longespee, The Pulpitum, The Blue Porch, the remains of painting in the roof space of the Bishops Palace, the remains of painting on the Cloister walls and the cleaning and consolidation of the Cloister Bosses. During these visits I developed a fondness for Salisbury and when I began to think of retirement, I started looking at houses in Salisbury.

While working in the conservation of wall paintings for over 50 years I have had the privilege of getting to know and working with a rather impressive number of exceptionally skilled and knowledgeable people to whom I have been able to turn to for advice, when needed, such as architects, archaeologist, and people working in the field of building conservation. They included John Harvey, Penelope Adamson, Martin Ashley, Michael Drury, Andrew Waring, Roy Strong, Corrinne Bennett, Maurice Kevil, Tim Tatton-Brown, John Crook, Keith Bennett, Ken Hemple, Richard Crook, Pamela Tudor Craig, Simon Goddard, Susannah Edmonds, Emile Godfrey, Dan Miles, Jill Atherton, Jill Kerr/Channer, Catherine Cullis, and Jerry Sampson.

Publications:
I have published a number of papers over the years (and shorter articles on the conservation of wall paintings in Conservation News), as well as papers in:
The British Museum Occasional Paper No.65 'Early Advances in Conservation' 1988;
'Preprints for the UKIC 30th Anniversary Conference' 1988;
BAR British Series 216 Early Mediaeval Painting and Painted Sculpture in England' 1990;
The Conservator as Art Historian' a UKIC publication 1992;
Proceedings of the 138th Summer Meeting of the Royal Archaeological Institute; Supplement to the Archaeological Journal Vol. 149 for 1992;
Journees de la SFIIC 'Les Anciennes Restorations en Peinture Mural' 1993.

60 St Ann Street:
Having often thought that it would be interesting to have an opportunity to restore and repair a medieval house, when 60 St Ann Street came onto the market, I viewed the house and fell in love with it! That was despite being told that it needed re-roofing, total re-plumbing and that the wall in the back room was saturated to chest height. I could see it needed work, but knew I had the knowledge, passion, and expertise to sympathetically restore a medieval building. One of the first things that I did on moving into the house was to approach two people who I had recently worked with for some help.

Jill Atherton MCIFA very kindly came and drew the plans of the house for me for a 'mates rate' charge for which I am very grateful. I am also grateful to Daniel Miles of Oxford Dendrochronology Labs, who managed to get some very precise dates for two parts of the house (see page 3, Research on History of House).

I moved into 60 St Ann Street on 29th July 2016 and for just over 7 years I have been working on different areas of building to slowly restore and improve it, where possible carrying out much of the work myself, or bringing in professionals with experience in historic buildings for roof and chimney repairs and work that is too heavy for me to do.

When I first moved into the house I was warned that I should not have the heating on for more than half an hour at a time, and the reason became obvious when it was turned off, as all the radiators and pipes started banging! The plumbing had become so full of limescale that it was beyond repair. It all had to be taken out and replaced. I also had a water filter installed to minimise limescale buildup in the future.

The house obviously needed to be completely re-roofed. Quite a lot of tiles had become very thin and were flaking badly, some were cracked and when viewed from within the roof space, one could see that many of the elderly wooden pegs holding tiles in place, had decayed and become loose, or were missing. The re-roofing was very efficiently and skilfully carried out by 'Chalk Valley Roofing' and despite the fact that quite a large number of tiles had to be replaced with a mix of salvaged tiles and conservation grade, hand made ones, the replacement ones have been so skilfully and sympathetically integrated with the ones that could be saved, that it is not at all obvious that quite a number are replacements.

My first year in 60 St Ann Street was a cold experience. This was because most of the timber framed external walls were no longer filled with laths and daub, but had been replaced with bricks, cement, and in a few places plasterboard. Internally, most of the walls had been covered with vinyl and wood-chip wallpaper, sometimes over a layer of bitumen, leaving the walls with very little, if any porosity. After removing wood-chip paper, layers of vinyl paper, and areas of bitumen, any damaged areas of plaster were repaired with a couple of layers of good quality, slaked lime mortar

and finished with a few coats of lime-wash in order to reproduce the traditional porosity and breath-ability of a mediaeval timber framed house. The following year was considerably warmer.

The external surfaces of the walls on the north, south and east sides of the house had been most unsuitably painted with one, and in some places, two layers of thick plastic 'waterproof' paint, much of which was blistering, peeling away and trapping rain water. This plastic paint has now been removed along with areas of gypsum, and patches of cement. Areas of damaged plaster were then made good with lime plaster followed by 3 to 4 applications of lime wash with the edition of fine sand to the penultimate coat, which will help it to shed rain water.

Research on History of House:
Dan Miles (Dendrochronologist) managed to get some samples of wood with sapwood still adhering which enabled him to establish precise dates for both the front and the rear parts of the house. The tree used in the front part of the house was cut down very early in the year 1450, before the sap was rising, and it came from Clarendon forest. The tree for the rear part of the house was cut down early in the year 1475. The house was also extended to the east (now number 66) in 1475. Dan was unable to find any suitable wood in the middle (kitchen) part of the house, apparently it was all too fast grown.

In the kitchen, both the north and south walls have the backs of chimneys projecting into the room (with no evidence of openings into the kitchen). It seems very probable that the kitchen section of the house was a considerably later addition, uniting the workshops to the rear with the residential part of the house at the front. See Existing Ground Floor Plan for Historic analysis.

Having completed the major works of re-roofing, re-plumbing, resolving rising damp issues, installing appropriate insulation, and improving the sustainability of the heating system, in accordance with my principles as a conservator, I feel it is not unreasonable to ask for permission to undertake three minor interventions which will have a major impact on both my quality of life and the ease of access for friends and family. My application concerns replacing the two C20th windows and moving one C19th door in the link building as summarised below and detailed in the attached plans, drawings, elevations and captioned photographs.

Windows:
The wood of both the window and the frame of the C20th sash window in the spare bedroom have decayed to such an extent that the window no longer fits its frame and the bottom bar of the lower half has the glass (at one corner) hanging free of the wood which has decayed beyond repair.

The current kitchen window, immediately below the spare bedroom window, was originally the same as the sash window above. From its construction, materials and proportions it appears to have been inserted c. 1950s-60s. The fittings to open this window are near the top of a large pane of glass. I can only reach them by climbing up and kneeling on the worktop (very near the stove top) to open or shut the windows. This is not a sensible or safe situation, particularly for someone of my age, as I am now 81years old.

Replacing both these windows with bespoke copies of the first-floor sash window, made to fit their actual window openings and constructed of traditional materials will reinstate the aesthetic unity of the south elevation and allow me and my guests to open them safely.

Door:
The existing door is positioned so close to the adjoining wall that the hinges sit only 5 cm from the corner of the room. When opened, the edge of the door is only 8cm from the end of the east wall kitchen units, making the space feel very cramped and awkward. It is aesthetically unpleasant, in as

much as anyone entering the house automatically looks left (towards the light), and has a clear view of the kitchen sink and draining board. If the door and its frame are moved to the other side of the present position of the door frame, the view will be of the path leading through to the garden.

I am applying for permission to move the door and its frame, one door width to the west side of its current position (reusing both the door and its frame). The section of wall containing the door is a later, brick built wall, aligned with the back of the (non functioning) chimney. The original timber frame wall (containing the early frame of a blocked door with a four-centred oak head in the west end of the wall), sits on the north side of the chimney, as illustrated in the Existing Ground Floor Plan showing the kitchen.

The current position of the door is not only awkward and inconvenient in relation to the layout of kitchen units, but also presents problems of access to those of my friends who are disabled. Two of my friends are wheelchair bound, while another friend has had an above knee amputation and needs to use crutches. Currently they all find it incredibly difficult to manoeuvre through the tight space caused by the door being in its current location.

Moving the door, would provide a much easier, more straightforward passage from one room to the other, whilst also benefitting the aesthetic of the building.